

REMARKS

Applicant has amended Claims 1, 12, 13, 17, and 19, which are the only independent claims pending in this application. Of these claims, all except Claim 13 have been rejected over Choi alone. Claim 13 has been rejected over Choi in combination with two other references.

All of the independent claims have been amended in essentially the same manner. For the reasons explained below, Applicant submits that the claims patentably distinguish over Choi.

Claim 1 has been amended to include two additional structural features, both of which are fully supported by the figures, such as Figure 1. First, the claim now recites that the liquid transfer channel is located between an end of the perforated sheet and an exterior wall of the reservoir, and that the liquid transfer channel is the sole path for fluid flow between the reservoir and the outlet area, except through the perforations.

The patent to Choi shows multiple liquid transfer channels, at least one near the exterior wall and at least one near the center of the structure. These channels are indicated by the unnumbered arrows in Figures 3(b) and 4(a). Clearly, in Choi, fluid flows through all of these channels. The arrangement shown in Choi is precluded by the language of amended Claim 1, which effectively requires that the only liquid transfer channel be located near the periphery of the sheet, i.e. near the wall of the reservoir. Thus, the present invention is structurally different from Choi, and this difference is set forth in the present amended claims.

Secondly, Claim 1 recites that the perforated sheet is free of any barrier, in contact with the sheet, in the outlet area (the region above

the sheet), to fluid flow into the liquid transfer channel. That is, there is no barrier, or "weir", which would impede the flow of fluid into the liquid transfer channel. Figure 1 clearly shows that the perforated sheet has no weir which might block fluid flow into the liquid transfer channel.

The patent to Choi, by contrast, clearly shows overflow weirs, such as weir 152 (see column 4, lines 9-10). The present invention has no such weir, and the language of Claim 1 now precludes such a weir. As explained in previous Amendments, it is a distinguishing feature of the present invention that it has no overflow weir.

The above-described limitations added to Claim 1 are clearly not found in or suggested by Choi. Therefore, Applicant submits that Claim 1 defines patentably over Choi.

Claims 12, 17, and 19 have been amended in a similar manner, and are also believed to define a patentable invention over Choi.

Claim 13 has been amended in a similar manner. The secondary references applied to this claim do not show or suggest the structural features discussed above, and therefore Claim 13 is believed allowable for the same reasons.

All of the claims not discussed above depend, directly or indirectly, from one of the above-mentioned claims, and are therefore also believed allowable.

For the reasons given above, Applicant submits that all of the claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicant requests reconsideration by the Examiner and early favorable action.